

October 1940

Student Foreign Missions Fellowship

Princeton, N.J.

Missions in a World at War

"What about missions in these days? Is there any opportunity for evangelism when the whole world is at war? Such questions have been coming in. Some have been very pessimistic, predicting the end of foreign missions. Some are anxious but trusting. Still others see in the present state of affairs the greatest challenge to world evangelization since the days of the Reformation.

How can Christians begin now to retreat before persecution? The blood of the martyrs is still the seed of the church. World war but reveals the more clearly how desperate and universal is the need of salvation in Jesus Christ. The power of the Holy Spirit is ours to bring this witness, and the shield of faith is our sure defense against war and all its dangers.

"In the world ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world"

It is encouraging to note how many of the great missionary societies had their birth during a period of war. "Several of the largest British societies were founded in the period of the French Revolution and the Napoleonic wars. The Baptist Missionary Society in Great Britain made some of its most notable advances during the Crimean and Boer wars. And some of the strongest societies in the United States were formed in war times. The foreign missionary work of at least one of the churches in our southern states was started in the darkened days of the American Civil War. 'Man's extremity is God's opportunity.'"

Today is no time for retrenchment; no time for taking cover. It is time for prayer, and time to go. Is not this security enough in days of war and danger that the Lord Jesus Christ has said, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."

EUROPEAN MISSIONS AND THE WAR

Continental Europe has supported over 40% of all missionaries in the world enterprise, and has contributed 40% of the whole budget of the work (North America contributes 47%). During this time of crisis missionary contributions from Europe have sunk to 14%. The foreign missions of the churches of Germany, Finland, Denmark, Norway, Holland, Belgium and France have already been cut off from home support. \$1,200,000 a year is needed for these stranded missionaries.

German Missions: Immediately on the invasion of Holland all Germans of military age in the Dutch East Indies were interned. This affected 64 of the 120 members of the Rhenish mission. 36 of the 38 German missionaries in India have been released from internment. In most parts of Africa German missionaries still at work have to report their movements, but may travel in their districts. Financial difficulties beset all the missions. 1563 workers need support.

French Missions: Out of 98 men missionaries in active service under the Paris Evangelical Missionary Society, 50 were mobilized for the army. The Armistice has placed those left on the field in urgent need of aid.

Scandinavian Missions: When Russia invaded Finland, Christians of Norway, Denmark and Sweden rallied to the support of the isolated Finnish missionaries in India and Africa. Now Norway and Denmark are themselves invaded and cut off from the support of even their own missionaries.

Meeting the Responsibility; The London Missionary Society (under which David Livingstone went to Africa), although facing a deficit of over 10,000 pounds, has made itself responsible for at least one year for the salary of a missionary of (a) the Free Church of Finland in North India; (b) the Paris mission in Madagascar; (c) the Berlin mission in Africa. In addition it is contributing an additional missionary for not less than three years to West China.

Pray for all the other mission boards, as well, as they make plans to meet the crisis. American Lutherans are undertaking responsibility for all the European Lutheran missionary societies except the Swedish. American Baptists are raising \$750,000 to meet the war emergency; the Northern Presbyterians \$125,000. Other boards are taking similar action. Pray for stranded workers of faith missions in desperate financial straits.

THE CHURCH IN LANDS AT WAR

England: Five British Army chaplains were among those who failed to return from Dunkerque. Pray that the men in service may hear the gospel preached in power.

Germany: From one of the 800 pastors of the German Confessional Church arrested in 1937 comes this stirring declaration of faith for the future. He said in an address in London on Easter Sunday, "The church (of Germany) has been driven into the catacombs, but as surely as this is Easter Day, there will be a Resurrection." Pray for persecuted Christians in the Reich.

China: Of the mission hospitals in war-torn China, 62 (23% of the total) have suffered. Here are the grim statistics:

Bombed.....13	Occupied..... 8
Destroyed..10	Looted..... 3
Burned..... 3	Closed.....12
Damaged.... 7	Interfered with.. 6

The loss to plants and equipment has been estimated at C\$1,500,000, but the work still goes on. Thousands have been converted through the influence of the Christian hospitals.

In spite of the war, more Bibles are being sold than ever before in the history of China. Enough Christian literature cannot be produced to meet the demand.

Japan: The church of Japan is in grave danger of becoming little but a tool of the government. The organization of a national church last month was another step in that direction, and comes near terminating 80 years of foreign mission work in the country. It is a merger, by government insistence, of all Christian sects, and will be called the Imperial Christian, or Genuine Japan Christian Church. Missionaries may be expelled, and the Old Testament may have to be discarded in favor of Japanese "history", with corresponding changes in the New Testament.

Revival of Shinto under government patronage had already made the situation serious. Baptisms were at a ten-year low in 1937, and in 1938 were even lower. Not even a three-year Nation-wide Evangelistic Campaign is stemming the decline in church and Sunday school attendance.

Encouraging, however, is a new interest on the part of the Japanese church in missionary work in China. It has not ignored the responsibility of evangelism in conquered areas, and last year reported 320 conversions in Manchuria, 122 in North China, and 21 in South China. "But Christianity," one missionary remarks, "cannot be effectively taught by foreigners under the bayonets of their fellow nationals." Let us pray earnestly for the church of Japan in this crisis.

January, 1941

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Convention Resolutions

You will be hearing a great deal about the 1940 F.M.F. convention, with its attendance of 300, representing 40 schools. Next month we plan to issue a full report for the information of the chapters, but in this number we give you only the resolutions passed by the convention. This is what the F.M.F. believes, and what its members are thinking about missions in these uncertain days.

WE, the members of the Student Foreign Missions Fellowship, assembled in National Convention,

Convinced that the Bible reveals the supreme work of the Christian church to be the evangelization of the world through the proclamation of the gospel of "Jesus Christ and Him crucified", and

Conscious that the greatest incentive to obedience to our Lord's great commission is the constant expectation of His personal return to this earth,

Do hereby resolve:

1. That the New Testament be given its God-ordained place of preeminence as His Missionary Textbook embracing all phases of missionary effort and revealing His methods for the certain accomplishment of this task in a manner that will bring souls to Himself and glory to His name.

2. That, trusting in the triumph of God and the power of prayer to prevail over the present world situation, we call for an all-out advance in missionary effort.

3. That we reaffirm our allegiance to our government and commend to its attention the vital importance of missionary work in a world at war, and that, in the light of the "desire of the British Government...that the services rendered by Christian missions should continue"* in

*From an open letter by Lord Halifax.

time of war, we urge our government also to use its powers to further the world missionary program in days of crisis.

4. That we pray earnestly for revival in the student world, cooperating to that end with existing organizations seeking to evangelize students.

5. That we call upon churches, schools, and conferences to aid in bringing missionary information to the attention of students by setting apart missionary Sundays in the churches, missionary days in conferences, and missionary weeks in schools, for the purpose of confronting Christians with the facts of the mission enterprise and their responsibility to find God's place for them in His program of world-evangelization.

--December 31, 1940

MEDICAL WORK

Chile. According to government statistics over sixty per cent of the children born in Chile die before reaching the age of three, mostly from preventable causes due to ignorance and poverty. Some of the most successful evangelistic work has begun in baby clinics conducted by mission stations there, but self-supporting.

Siam. Of Siam's 10,000 lepers only 1000 have been reached by the various mission hospitals. Practically all patients have become Christians, however. Now healed lepers are being sent out to establish clinics in out-lying districts. No wages are paid, but medicines are supplied free.

China. Statistics can give only a bare idea of the terrible odds against which missionary doctors are struggling in war-ravaged China. "It is literally true that if every city west of the Mississippi were destroyed, and the entire population without shelter, the sum total of misery would be far less than what exists in China today," writes the Chairman of the great United Council for Relief in China. When the Japanese captured beautiful Hangchow, out of its million people, in a single day and night, only 200,000 remained. In the International Settlement of Shanghai the police gathered up on the streets 79,000 corpses of refugees that had staggered into the city, dying of starvation and wounds.

Even in the refugee camps that were so wonderfully organized, 62,000 little children under five years of age died before they could be resuscitated from the suffering through which they had passed.

PRAY for the medical work of the missionary enterprise. Pray that the Lord may find for His use men who are not only doctors, but Christians. Praise Him for the effective testimony of medical missions in a suffering world.

EDUCATIONAL WORK

Philippine Islands. Young people are crowding the public high schools far beyond capacity; opportunities for Christian work among students are great and increasing; yet the present missionary staff of one of the largest missions in the Philippines numbers 57, whereas in 1930 it was 72.

China. When the Rev. Calvin W. Mateer arrived in Shantung Province in Northern China in 1864 there was no chance for preaching, so he started a school with six boys and no equipment or buildings. He built his scientific instruments with his own hands. Out of that humble beginning grew the first Christian college in China. And so earnestly and thoroughly did Dr. and Mrs. Mateer teach the Bible and present Christ, that every graduate was a Christian even when their number exceeded a hundred.

PRAY that mission schools may continue to be distinctively Christian. Pray for Korea where mission schools are closed by government persecution, and for Persia where the educational work of the missions is being secularized and nationalized by government edict.

EVANGELISTIC WORK

India. Some years ago the Standard Oil Company operating in India, the Burma Oil, and the Burma Shell Company, said in effect, "We will put light in every one of the 700,000 villages in this land." They have done it. What has the church done? Today Christ is not being preached at all in 500 out of 600 native states, comprising one quarter of the population of India. If 1000 new missionaries were sent to India, each could find 650 villages with no resident missionary. The oil companies have done their work. Will the church of Christ do less?

Japan. Missionaries in the country have developed newspaper evangelism, and now the work is being carried on by Japanese Christians. Since the Japanese people are highly literate, and the newspapers have huge circulations, paid advertisements of Christianity have gone into thousands of untouched homes. The response has been great, with much correspondence requesting more information.

PRAY that the Lord will open our eyes to the need of the world, and our minds to new methods of effectively presenting Him to men.